

EPA Honors Disneyland For Reducing Waste

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By [Joseph Pimentel](#)

Walking around Disneyland's Circle D Corral ranch, Jared Blumenfeld was in awe.

A regional administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency, Blumenfeld went inside the behind-the-scenes barn where Disney houses animals including horses, bent down to inspect a container, and with his right hand fished out clumps of stringy hair.

A Disney employee told the U.S. official that after every grooming, the hairs that naturally fall off of the horse is collected then donated to Matter of Trust, a nonprofit specializing in helping mop up oil spills in the ocean; the thick hair helps soak up the oil.

"Here, at Disneyland, everything is recycled down to their horses' hair," Blumenfeld quipped while holding up a clump of black hair with his hand.

On Tuesday, the EPA awarded the [Disneyland Resort](#) the 2014 Food Recovery Challenge award for its zero-waste efforts and food recovery. Disneyland is the first theme park to receive the award.

"Everyone looks to Disneyland as a model of what they can be doing," Blumenfeld said. "So when recycling becomes a big part of what Disneyland cares about, it's going to spread to other folks around the country and around the world."

The EPA's Food Recovery Challenge began in 2012 as part of the agency's efforts to partner with businesses to prevent and reduce wasted food. About 10 awards are handed out annually.

Winners have included UMass Amherst for a student-led waste reduction effort that resulted in nearly 1,300 tons of food waste being composted; and the operators of Lincoln Financial Field, the home of the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles, which composted more than 105 tons of food waste in 2012.

Since 2013, the year the award was based on, Disney's Anaheim parks, hotels and shopping district were cited for:

- Diverting more than seven million pounds of food scraps from landfills to local farm-feed lots, which are then given to animals such as chickens and cows.
 - Donating more than 50 tons of surplus unused food, from banquets and catering, to people through the Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County.
 - Converting more than 1,200 tons of used cooking oil from restaurants into biodiesel that fuels the Disneyland Railroad and the Mark Twain Riverboat.
 - Recycling 99.8 percent of waste from the Circle D Corral that is home to the horses that march along Main Street, U.S.A., and goats, a turkey and chicken.
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